



124 North Capitol Avenue  
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Dear Chairwoman Cox and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to express support for Marshall Plan components included in SB 941. My name is Kim Preston, and I serve as the Midwest Regional Legislative Director for Excellence in Education in Action. ExcelinEd in Action is a nonpartisan, nonprofit education advocacy organization.

As states around the country are considering what it will take to ensure they have the talent necessary to grow and attract high-value industries, their leaders are having similar discussions regarding the needed alignment of education systems and workforce development programming. Frankly, these states are your competitors in a race to spur economic growth.

As a first step, the Marshall plan puts in place a process to bring businesses together with both the K-12 and postsecondary education communities to develop robust career pathways aligned to high-demand, high-salary, and high-upward-mobility careers. This collaboration will be critical to Michigan's economic growth and development for years to come, and it will be exciting to see the forging of strong new partnerships that lead to positive outcomes for students. I commend Michigan on the roughly \$22 million investment in these robust career pathways.

I also applaud you for providing bonus funding to schools each time a student earns an industry-recognized credential that is tied to high-demand, high-salary, and high-upward-mobility fields. Combined with the plan's focus on robust pathways in computer science and IT such as cybersecurity, an emphasis on career planning that recognizes the value of stackable credentials, and investments in professional educators, Michigan has a real chance to become a national leader in preparing students for high-value careers and simultaneously addressing the skills gap.

As a small technical matter, we would recommend adding computer science, alongside IT, to the list of high-demand fields on page 18. As the computer science industry continues to grow and offer high-wage jobs in Michigan, taking this step will preserve important opportunities for students.

Finally, SB 941 includes grants to schools to support their conversion to a competency-based instructional model. Michigan clearly recognizes the importance of ensuring students demonstrate mastery of key concepts and skills—regardless of time, place or pace. We applaud this commitment to the development of personalized learning models that will benefit Michigan's



students, and we look forward to hearing news of innovations from schools who receive these grants.

The aforementioned components of SB 941 make great strides toward setting up both students and businesses for success. The potential long-term and positive effects of well-planned policies like these are countless, and I encourage you to support the legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kim Preston". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Kim Preston  
Midwest Regional Legislative Director